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Paper Read before the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec,

March 6th, 1872.

By Dr. WILLIAM JAMES ANDERSON, President.

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Paper III.—CANADIAN HISTORY: THE SIEGE AND BLOCKADE OF QUEBEC, BY GENERALS MONTGOMERY AND ARNOLD, IN 1775-6.

By Dr. WM. JAS. ANDERSON, President.

(*Read before the Society, March 6th*, 1872.)

On the 6th July, 1775, the American *Congress* published the *Declaration* of Independence, and at once commenced active military operations in the neighbourhood of Boston; and though they met a serious reverse on their first collision with the British troops at *Bunker's Hill*, their adversaries reaped no advantage; and the *Continentals*, as they were called, still invested Boston, increasing in numbers every day. As the British commander did not think it prudent to make any further attack until the arrival of reinforcements, the Congress decided to carry the war into Canada and to try to take Quebec. The feeling of repulsion which had ever existed between the Canadinas and the "*Bostonnais*" was by no means diminished; but Congress was well informed that there was no very loyal feeling between the Canadians and their new masters, and that a portion of them, especially in Montreal and Quebec, were positively disaffected. The feeling of disloyalty they also knew was not confined to the French Canadians, as some of the most actively discontented were of British or Irish origin, and were already in correspondence with them. They likewise knew that the British authorities in Canada had only one weak battalion, consisting of a part of the 7th Fusiliers and 26th regiment, for the defence of the whole Province. Taking advantage of the position, Congress decided on sending, with secrecy and celerity, two corps, under able and energetic commanders, the first of which, under General Montgomery, was to make a descent on Montreal by Lake Champlain; the other, commanded by Arnold, was to move up the Kennebec river and down the Chaudière upon Quebec. This latter attempt

could only have been thought of and undertaken, particularly at so advanced a period of the year, by men who had been inured to the hardships and toils of the early settlers of America, and were animated by the self-reliance and enthusiasm which such a life is calculated to produce.

Three thousand men, who had assembled at *Crown Point* under Montgomery, suddenly advanced into Canada. *Isle aux Noix* was evacuated at their approach, and, meeting no obstruction, Forts St. John and Chambly were at once invested. 500 British regulars, with 200 Canadian militia, defended St. John; the detachment which occupied Chambly, which was totally indefensible, surrendered on being summoned. A large quantity of stores and ammunition, which had been very unaccountably placed there, fell into Montgomery's hands. Sir Guy Carleton, the Governor, was then at Sorel with a battalion of militia and some Highland settlers whom he had hastily collected; with another corps of militia he proposed to move on St. John and raise the siege; but the Americans having already occupied the St. Lawrence, he was unable to pass over from Montreal to La Prairie, which was occupied by the enemy. On this the troops at Sorel *dispersed;* and St. John, a simple earthenwork without any casemates, having no prospect of relief, capitulated on the 3rd November. Montgomery immediately advanced on Sorel, sent a detachment across the St. Lawrence, and established batteries on either side, which completely commanded the navigation and prevented all communication between Quebec and Montreal. Montreal, without a garrison, and with a partially disaffected population, capitulated on the 13th November, and with it surrendered eleven British vessels. The arrangements of Sir Guy Carleton to this date have been severely criticised and condemned by some parties; but perhaps Sir James Carmichael is only just when he says: "The American attack was, however, so unexpected, and so immediately followed the commencement of hostilities, that in all probability no arrangement for the defence of the Canadian frontier had been contemplated."

While there can be no doubt that, as a body, the *Canadians* were at this time indifferent, if not disaffected, it would be unjust not to mention the two hundred who were shut up in St. John, and who behaved very creditably during the siege; but special notice is due to *M. Louis M. de Salaberry*, who was seriously wounded by the explosion of a shell thrown into the fort by the *Americans*. We ought also to record the only success which had hitherto attended the British. On sitting down before St John, Montgomery had despatched the celebrated *Ethan Allan* with a reconnoitering party. Allan, arriving in the neighbourhood of Montreal, learned that the town was weakly defended, and that if he made the attempt to take it by surprise he would likely be successful, as he would be aided by the disaffected. Though his command did not exceed two hundred men, a great portion of whom, according to *Lossing*, the American writer, were Canadians whom he had enlisted, he boldly determined to make the attempt in conjunction with Major Brown, whom he accidentally met on a similar errand, and at the head of a mixed force like his own. *He* was to cross at Longueuil, *Brown* at La Prairie; and the attack was to be made simultaneously from these opposite points at dawn of day. Allan succeeded in crossing in canoes; Brown did not make his appearance. In the meantime, information of the proposed attempt had reached Sir Guy Carleton through a deserter; he promptly collected two hundred and fifty of the inhabitants, chiefly English and Irish, and sent them with thirty men of the 26th regiment, under Major Carsden, to attack the invaders. In the meantime, Allan, not having been joined by Brown, and being informed of the then state of things in Montreal, had retreated to some houses, where he was attacked next day by the British, and after a short resistance compelled to surrender. All the Canadians had deserted him; five of his men were killed and ten wounded; and the remaining thirty-eight, with himself, became prisoners of war. On the British side, Major Carsden, the commander, Mr. Patterson, a merchant, and two privates were killed.

Before the American army entered Montreal, Carleton destroyed the public stores, and, together with Brigadier Prescott and one hundred and twenty soldiers, left it, with the intention of reaching Quebec, which *he* fortunately succeeded in doing, having, by the aid of a loyal Canadian, *Captain Bouchette*, grandfather of the present Surveyor-General, passed through the American floating batteries, &c., at Sorel, in a boat with muffled oars, during the night.* Prescott and the soldiers were not so successful, but next day had to surrender themselves prisoners of war. Sir Guy Carleton did not reach Quebec a moment too soon. We have mentioned how the force collected at Sorel had dissolved. Fortunately, Colonel McLean, who commanded the *Royal Emigrants*, chiefly composed of the disbanded Fraser's Highlanders, retreated with them in a body numbering one hundred and fifty, to Quebec; these, with about one hundred recruits which had been raised by Malcolm Fraser and Captain Campbell in Newfoundland, and which had just landed, seventy Royal Fusiliers, and twenty-two Royal Artillery, formed the nucleus of a garrison.

In the meantime, Arnold, whose force consisted of 1,200 men, embarked on the Kennebec on the 22nd September in 200 batteaux; after encountering incredible and unexpected hardships, he arrived with his force greatly diminished by desertions at Point Levis, on the 9th of November. Their approach, however, was not then unexpected, as an Indian, to whom Arnold had entrusted despatches for Montgomery, had delivered them to Lieutenant-Governor Cramahé. Fortunately, too, at this time the *Lizard* frigate arrived from England with £20,000. Though Cramahé, if we credit

* The Quebec *Gazette* of 23rd November contains this notice:—"On Sunday last, at noon, the armed snow *Fell*, Captain Napier, arrived from above, having on board His Excellency Major-General *Carleton*, Charles *Lenaudière*, Esq., his A.D.C., Captain Owen and Captain Selwyn, of the 7th or Royal Fusiliers, with several men of their corps. His Excellency was saluted on his arrival by the garrison and the frigates and armed vessels in harbour."

Major Henry Caldwell, was not the right man in the right place, but was thought to truckle to the disaffected, a council of war was held, at which it was decided that the town should be defended to the last. The most prominent men in this council were the captains of the *Lizard* and *Hunter* and Colonel McLean and Major Caldwell. A very important decision was arrived at, that the *Lizard* and *Hunter* should winter in Quebec, and their crews assist in the defence of the place, and that an embargo should be laid on all the merchantmen in harbour, so that their masters and crews might also be made available.

Arnold arrived at Point Levis on the 9th ; but as all the boats and canoes had been removed, a surprise was out of the question. And as it took several days to collect the necessary means of transport, and as the river was commanded by the ships of war, he only succeeded in crossing during the night of the 13th, when, landing at Wolfe's cove, he made his appearance on the morrow on the heights of Abraham, his whole force not exceeding 800 men. They at once took possession of the General Hospital and Major Caldwell's house at *Sans-Bruit*, on the St. Foy road. The troops were hutted on the plains ; but Arnold, fearing an attack from the town, as his troops were in want of ammunition and stores of all kinds, after laying the neighbourhood under contribution for horses, bullocks, beef, &c., at the end of the week retreated to Pointe-aux-Trembles, there to await a junction with Montgomery. The day after the withdrawal of Arnold, Carleton arrived at Quebec, and at once inspired new life and vigor into the administration of affairs. Unfortunately, there had been during the last six months a misunderstanding between Sir Guy and Major Caldwell ; but the latter, immediately on the General's arrival, called on him, and henceforth worked cordially with him for the public good. The General's first step was to order all *the suspected, and all who were unwilling to take up arms, to leave the town.* " That order," says Caldwell, " strengthened the garrison considerably. We could guard

against open and avowed enemies, but not against those lurking about town ; cabals then ceased, and everybody seemed zealous for the public service : the *Bonfields* left the town on that occasion ; *Wells, Zachary McAuley, Murdock Stewart, John McCord,* and several others, among whom were four or five of the militia officers appointed by Cramahé. It is not doubted whether your friend, Mr. Allsop, would have been of the number, had it not been for the employments he held. He continued, however, to be almost the only man in the garrison that did not do duty, pleading his business as commissary, to which employment Mr. Carleton named him." We can judge from this of the anxiety and doubt which must have existed as to the good faith of many within the city. All the English authorities agree that the *Canadians* were *all* at first very lukewarm ; but, finding the English inhabitants resolved to defend the town, a body of them ultimately came round, and some distinguished themselves by their zeal, hearty co-operation, and approved bravery ; still, it is shown that though the numbers of the *Canadians* capable of bearing arms largely exceeded the British, yet, out of 1,800 men organized for the defence, there were only five hundred and fifty-three Canadians under that excellent officer, Colonel Dupré ; the rest, in addition to the regulars already mentioned, were composed of 330 British militia, commanded by Caldwell ; 400 seamen, under Captains Hamilton and McKenzie ; 50 masters and mates, 35 marines, and 120 artificers.

Talking of the British, Caldwell says :—" We were about 330, officers included ; everybody did duty, either as officers or privates, and, I can assure you, duty was never done with more punctuality or earnestness—inhabitants worth £3,000 or £4,000 standing sentry in their turn, during our severe winter nights, with the greatest alacrity ; and what is still more to their honor, (as it was found necessary to mix the guards, British and Canadian,) they submitted with the greatest cheerfulness to the command of the Canadian officers, whom they held cheap, and who were in reality their

inferiors, both as to education and fortune. Indeed, I had the greatest reason in general to be satisfied with my corps ; for Cramahé gave up his share of the command of it, never making his appearance out of doors the whole winter."

On the 1st December Montgomery joined Arnold at *Pointe-aux-Trembles*, and their united forces little exceeded 2000 men ; but they had the confidence of men who had already achieved great deeds, and had hope that their friends within and in the neighbourhood of Quebec, with whom they managed to keep up a regular correspondence, would be able to aid them in many ways. Accordingly they advanced, and on the 4th arrived before Quebec, and at once established themselves in its neighbourhood, occupying many houses in the suburbs, chiefly in St. Roch's. General Montgomery established his head-quarters at *Holland's House*, which stood in the neighbourhood of the present Holland House, from whence he sent a flag to summon the city to surrender. General Carleton refused to hold any communication ; and Montgomery, highly indignant, proceeded to erect batteries, which, from the small calibre of the guns, proved utterly inefficient.

In the meantime the besieged were not idle. The defences of the city were far from perfect, and there was no officer of engineers there but the subsequently well-known *James Thompson*, who had come out to Canada with Wolfe as a volunteer in the Fraser's Highlanders, and who, in consideration of his services at Louisbourg and Quebec, had been appointed, in 1761, Superintendent of Military Works at Quebec by General Murray. Mr. Thompson, in his journal, informs us :—"I received the orders of General Carleton to put the extensive fortifications of Quebec in a state of defence at a time when there was not a single article of material in store with which to perform such an undertaking. I was, consequently, authorized to purchase all that was needful, and to prosecute the work with the greatest despatch. My first object was to secure stout

spar-timber for pallisading a great extent of open ground, between the gates called *Palace* and *Hope*, and again from Cape Diamond half-bastion, along the brow of the Cape towards the Castle of St. Lewis. I accordingly succeeded in securing from *M. Laflêche's* timber-yard as much spar-timber as I required at three farthings a foot. I made a beginning with fourteen Canadian carpenters at Palace Gate, in pallisading with loopholes for musketry, and made a projection in the form of a bastion as a defence for the line of pickets, in the gorge of which I erected a block-house, which made a good defence. While employed at this station of the works, a company of artificers arrived from Halifax, and another from Newfoundland joined me soon after. The Halifax men I set to work at pallisading the open ground on Cape Diamond, and framing and erecting a large block-house on the outside of Port Louis, to serve as a captain's nightly guard-house, in order to be prepared against a surprise; also a block-house on the Cape under Cape Diamond bastion; at the same time a party was employed in laying platforms and repairing embrasures. I also had a party of carpenters *barricading the extremities of the Lower Town* by blocking up the windows of the houses next to the river side and those facing the water, leaving loopholes for musketry in case the St. Lawrence shall freeze across. While these detached services were in progress, I was on horseback from the rising to the setting of the sun." In further illustration of this, as it will have an important bearing, Caldwell says: "Barriers were made between the Upper and Lower Town, and at the *extremities* of the Lower Town at *Sault-au-Matelot*, and at the other side at *Près-de-Ville*, which you may remember is *on the further side of the King's wharf, past the King's forges;* these posts were strengthened with cannon."

Mr. Thompson also writes, that "on the night of the 14th November Arnold paraded his men in front of Port St. Louis, about three hundred yards distant, and saluted the town with three cheers, in full expectation that the gates would be opened for their reception. At this juncture I was on Cape

Diamond bastion, and myself levelled and fired a 24-pounder at them, which had the effect of making them disperse and hastily retire to *Point-aux-Trembles.*"

The blockade of Quebec continued from the 4th to 31st December—for it was nothing but a blockade, the artillery of Montgomery being, as we have seen, powerless. But as the season would not permit them to remain longer in the open field, and as they were suffering terribly from the ravages of small-pox, there remained only the alternative either to retire at once or to get possession of the city by escalade. Montgomery decided to attempt the latter, and the night of the 31st December was fixed on. The garrison were not, however, to be taken by surprise, for it so happened that on the 23rd, Major Caldwell's clerk, Joshua Wolfe, who had been taken prisoner at *Sans Bruit*, managed to escape, bringing with him an American, who gave information that ladders were prepared, and that the intention was to attack the town at several points simultaneously on the first favorable night. Being thus put on guard, a sharper look-out than usual was kept. On the morning of the 31st December Montgomery made his attack at four different points:—two from the front on the heights of Abraham, which were feints, while a column headed by Arnold was to advance under the heights along the St. Charles, and endeavor to force an entrance by *Sault-au-Matelot*; and Montgomery himself was to lead the fourth between the St. Lawrence and Cape Diamond, and force the barricade at *Près-de-Ville.* The night was dark and drizzly, a light snow or sleet falling. About 5 a.m., Captain Frazer, who had charge of the main guard, on returning from his round, gave information that there was brisk firing at Cape Diamond. Col. McLean, who was second in command in the garrison, requested Major Caldwell to take part of his corps there, and if it should prove a feint, as was supposed, to leave any reinforcement that he might think necessary and return with the rest. We now give Caldwell's words:—"I accordingly went there, found the enemy firing at a distance, saw there

was nothing more serious intended, and, after ordering a proper disposition to be made, proceeded to *Port Louis*. There I met Captain Laws, to whom the General had given the command of an extra picket, composed of the best men of the detachment of the 7th and McLean's corps there; him I ordered back again to wait the General's orders, and proceeded to St. John's gate, where I first learned that the enemy had surprised the post at *Sault-au-Matelot*, and had got into the Lower Town." We will have to stop Caldwell's narration and accompany Arnold. Proceeding by the way already indicated, at the head of six hundred men, he assaulted with great impetuosity the first barrier, which he forced after a slight resistance; but here Arnold was wounded, and had to be carried to the General Hospital. The command devolved on Captain Morgan, who, driving the guard before him, advanced to the second barricade, about two hundred yards further on. We now resume *Caldwell's* narrative:—"I still had part of the British militia with me, and took upon me also to send some of those whom I found unnecessary on the ramparts to the party to wait for orders; and took an officer with a small party of the Fusiliers with me by Palace Gate, just at the time when the officer I had mentioned to you, with about seventy men, was ordered to make a sortie, and attack the enemy at the *Sault-au-Matelot* in the rear. I hastened with what expedition I could by the back of the Hotel-Dieu in the Lower Town, and on my way passed by the picket drawn up under the field-officer of the day, who was Major Cox, formerly of the 47th, and now Lieut.-Governor of Gaspé. I got him to allow me to take your friend Nairne with a subaltern and thirty men, and then proceeded to the Lower Town, where I found things, though not in a good way, not yet desperate. The enemy had got in at the *Sault-au-Matelot;* but, neglecting to push on, as they should have done, were stopped at the second barrier, which our people got shut just as I arrived. It was so placed as to shut up the street of *Sault-au-Matelot* from any communication with the rest of the Lower Town. As I was coming up, I found our

people, the Canadians especially, shy of advancing towards the barrier, and was obliged to exert myself a good deal. To do old *Voyer*, their colonel, justice, though he is no great officer, he did not shew any want of spirit. However, my coming up with Nairne and a lieutenant with fifty seamen gave our people new spirits. I posted people in the different houses that commanded the street of *Sault-au-Matelot*—some in the house where Levy, the Jew, formerly lived; others at Lymburner's. The officers of the Fusiliers I posted in the street with fixed bayonets, ready to receive the enemy in case they got on our side of the barrier; they had on their side of it fixed some ladders, and then another to our side, as if to come down by, that was useful to us. I ordered it to be pulled away, and fixed it to a window in the gable-end of a house towards us, the front of which commanded the street of *Sault-au-Matelot* and their side of the barrier. Then I sent *Captains Nairne* and *Dambourges*, an officer also of McLean's corps, with a party of their people. *Nairne* and *Dambourges* entered the window with a great deal of spirit, and got into the house on that side just as the enemy was entering it by the front door; but *Nairne* soon dislodged them with his bayonets, driving them into the street; nor did they approach the barrier afterwards. They, however, kept up a brisk fire, from the back windows of the houses they occupied in *Sault-au-Matelot* street, on our people in Lymburner's house on his wharf, and the street adjacent, from one of their houses. Their fire, however, slackened a good deal about nine o'clock, especially after I brought a nine-pounder on Lymburner's wharf to bear upon them, the first shot of which killed one of their men and wounded another. I then called on Nairne, in their hearing, so that he should let me know when he heard firing on the other side. Our General had sent five hundred men to hem the enemy in on that side. They soon after began to give themselves up, and surrendered to Nairne, who sent them through the window to us. They then began to crowd in, in such numbers that we opened the barrier, and they all gave themselves up on

that side. Thus ended our attack on that side, in which the enemy had twenty men killed, upwards of forty wounded, and about four hundred made prisoners."

This is the most succinct and reliable account yet published, and is contained in a letter addressed in 1776 by Caldwell to his friend General Murray, and which was published by the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, under the superintendence of Mr. LeMoine, who, in a note, says that "It was there that an athletic Canadian, named *Charlant*, distinguished himself, together with Captains *Dumas* and *Dambourges*." We do not know on what authority Mr. LeMoine made his note, but give it as we find it, being desirous that credit should be given where it is justly due. *Garneau* has given a somewhat different account of the affair. We now give a translation of it:—"About this time General Carleton sent an order to Major *Nairne* and Captain *Dambourges* to go with a strong detachment to sustain the troops then engaged in the Lower Town. As soon as the reinforcement arrived it was decided to act on the offensive, and to attack the houses occupied by the enemy. In consequence, Captain *Dambourges*, with the *Canadians*, leaped over the barricades and planted the ladders brought by the Americans against the first house occupied by them, and took it by assault. Major Nairne did the same on his side. These two officers entered successively, in the same manner, the adjoining houses, one after the other." *Sanguinet*, a contemporary, like Caldwell, has recorded that M. *Dambourges* mounted by a window by means of a ladder which had been brought by the enemy, and, followed by many *Canadians*, burst through the window in the gable of the house. He found there many *Bostonnais*. After giving them *a discharge of muskets*, he drove them out with the bayonet, and entering the chamber with many *Canadians*, animated with a courage like his own, threw themselves with such energy on the *Bostonnais*, that they surrendered themselves prisoners." We also find in the journal of an English officer of the garrison as follows:—"Major Nairne

of the *Royal Emigrants*, and *M. Dambourges*, of the same corps, by their gallant behaviour attracted the attention of everybody. The General ordered them with a strong detatchment to the support of those already engaged in the Lower Town. These two gentlemen mounted by laddres, and took possession of a *house*, *with fixed bayonets*, which the rebels had already entered, and thus secured a post which overlooked a strong battery on the wharf and commanded a principal street."

Many years afterwards, in 1822, when an effort was made to secure, through Lord Dalhousie, a pension for the surviving daughters of Lieut. Dambourges, the veteran *James Thompson* was applied to, to certify, and did so as follows:—"That the enemy made an attack on the Lower Town in the morning of the 31st December of that year, when Lieut. Dambourges, with the late Lieut.-Colonel Nairne, did, by the means of a ladder, enter through the window of a house in Sault-au-Matelot street, then occupied by the enemy; and by this bold attempt the enemy abandoned the house; and by this, Colonel Nairne's party, which followed him and *Dambourges* through the *same window*, and by another party arriving warily at the same time at the north end of the street, that part of the enemy were made prisoners." This is the story of the defeat of Arnold's command at Sault-au-Matelot. Though told somewhat differently by the several narrators, it is evident that both *Nairne* and *Dambourges* conducted themselves as men of valour and discretion. That the British Government thought that Dambourges deserved well, is apparent from the fact of his having, though a native of old France, been appointed to a lieutenancy in the 84th regiment.

We now must turn our attention to what had been going on at the same time at the other extremity of the Lower Town at *Près-de-Ville*, which, from its disastrous termination to the gallant Montgomery, has generally attracted more attention than the attack by Arnold, though it has not generally been so well understood.

At the spot indicated, and which is now pointed out to the tourist by a board, with inscription, attached to the rock, the abrupt precipice of Cape Diamond projects forward to the river, forming now, as then, a narrow defile. Here, under the direction of Mr. Thompson, a barrier had been erected, and a battery of four 3-pounders and one 4-pounder placed in a *hangar* or outhouse on the south side, which completely commanded the pass. Hawkins says: "The exact spot where the barrier was erected, before which Montgomery fell, may be described as crossing the narrow road under the mountain, immediately opposite to the west end of a building which stands on the south, and was formerly occupied by Mr. Racey as a brewery. It is now numbered 58. At the time of the siege this was called the *Potash*. The battery extended to the south end, nearly to the river." There is little change in the natural features of the spot, though there is in the houses; but there would be no difficulty in recognizing it, even if it were not pointed out in the manner mentioned. The defence of this post was entrusted to a *Canadian* militia officer, *Captain Chabot*, with thirty Canadian and eight British militiamen. There were also associated with him, as artillerymen, a master of one of the transports, *Captain Barnsfare*, with nine seamen. Mr. LeMoine says, "this is an error: *two Canadian* militia officers were in charge of this post;" and he quotes *Sanguinet*, who says: "Then *MM. Chabot* and *Alexandre Picard*, who commanded that day the guard, gave the order to fire the cannon charged with grape." Mr. Chauveau also has written: "Below us, at the foot of that tower on which floats the British flag, *Montgomery and his soldiers all fell, swept by the grape-shot of a single gun pointed by a Canadian artilleryman.*"

Hawkins's account is undoubtedly the best given by an English authority. He tells us that Montgomery, at the head of *seven hundred* men, advanced to the attack. "At break of day, some of the guard, being on the look-out, discovered, through the imperfect light, a body of troops in full march from Wolfe's cove, upon the post. The men had been under arms, awaiting with the utmost steadiness for the attack,

which they had reason to expect from the reports of deserters; and in pursuance of judicious arrangements which had been previously concerted, the enemy was allowed to approach unmolested within a small distance. They halted about fifty yards from the barrier; and as the guard remained perfectly still, it was probably concluded that they were not on the alert. To ascertain this, an officer was seen to approach quite near to the barrier. After listening a moment or two, he returned to the body, and they instantly dashed forward, at double-quick time, to attack the post. This was what the guard expected: the artillerymen stood by with lighted matches, and *Captain Barnsfare* at the critical moment giving the word, the fire of the guns and musketry was directed with deadly precision against the head of the advancing column. The consequence was a precipitate retreat: the enemy was scattered in every direction: the groans of the wounded and dying were heard; but, nothing certain being known, *the path continued to be swept by the cannon and musketry for the space of ten minutes.* The enemy having retired, *thirteen* bodies were found in the snow; and Montgomery's orderly sergeant, desperately wounded, but yet alive, was brought into the guard-room. On being asked if the General himself was, the sergeant evaded the question by saying that he had not seen him for some time, though he could not but have known the fact. This faithful sergeant died in about an hour afterwards."

Mr. James Thompson has left an account somewhat different from the others; he says:—"The path leading round the bottom of the rock on which the garrison stands, and called *Près-de-Ville*, was then quite narrow, so that the front of the line of march could present only a few files of men. The *sergeant* who had charge of the barrier-guard, *Hugh McQuarters*, (where there was a gun kept loaded with grape and musket-balls, and levelled every evening in the direction of the said path,) had orders to be vigilant, and when assured of the approach by any body of men, to fire the gun. It was General Montgomery's fate to be

among the leading files of the storming party; and the precision with which *McQuarters* acquitted himself of the orders he had received, resulted in the death of the General, two aides-de-camp, and a sergeant—at least these were *all* that could be found after the search made at dawn of day, next morning. *There was but one discharge of the gun*, from which the General had received a grape-shot wound in his chin, one in the groin, and one through the thigh, which shattered the bone."

Mr. LeMoine has attached this note to Thompson's relation: "There were other Canadian worthies who can legitimately share the credit of this *fait d'armes—Chabot*, *Coffin*, and the captain of an English transport, *Barnsfare*."

Here is *Caldwell's* account of it:—"In the meantime, Montgomery made his attack at *Près-de-Ville*; rockets were thrown up as a signal to Arnold that both attacks might be made at the same time. He got past some pickets, where we at first established our advanced posts. The guard was alarmed in time, and prepared for his reception; but the post was much stronger than I believe he imagined, and defended by four cannons there, and a four-pounder: *they were served by some seamen*, under the orders of the master of the transport; his name was *Barnsfare*. The guard was under the command of a *Canadian* officer of militia—the men, *Canadians* and *British*, being mixed. Barnsfare declared he would not fire till he was sure of doing execution, and, with the utmost coolness, waited till the enemy came within his view, at about thirty yards' distance, where they received *a general discharge from the cannon and musketry*. Nothing but groans were heard, and the rebels immediately retired, their General, his Secretary, two or three other officers, and about five privates, being killed on the spot; their wounded got off."

It is proper to give *here* what Hawkins has said on a point of some interest:—"Soon after the repulse of the enemy before the post at *Près-de-Ville*, information was given

to the officer in command there, that Arnold's party from the General Hospital, advancing along the St. Charles, had captured the barrier at the *Sault-au-Matelot*, and that he intended an attack on that of *Près-de-Ville* by taking it in the rear. Immediate preparations were made for the defence of the post against such an attack, by turning some of the guns of an inner barrier, not far from the old Custom-House, towards the town; and though the intelligence proved false—Arnold having been wounded, and his division captured—yet, the incident deserves to be commemorated, *as affording a satisfactory contradiction* to some accounts which have appeared in print representing the guard at *Près-de-Ville* as having been paralysed by fear, the post and barrier 'deserted,' and the fire which killed Montgomery merely 'accidental.' On the contrary, the circumstances which we have related, being *authentic*, proved that the conduct of the *Près-de-Ville* guard was firm and collected in the hour of danger, and that, by their coolness and steadiness, they mainly contributed to the safety of the city."

It was not ascertained till next day that General Montgomery had been killed, when General Carleton sent to the Seminary to enquire if any of the American officers, prisoners, could identify the body. A field-officer of Arnold's division, who had been captured that morning, proceeded with a party to *Près-de-Ville*, and at once identified the body. *Thompson* says:—"The snow had fallen on the previous night about knee-deep; the only part of a body that appeared above the level of the snow was that of the General himself, whose hand and part of the left arm were in an erect position; but the body itself was much distorted, the knees being drawn up towards the head. The other bodies that were found at the moment were those of his *aides-de-camp*, Cheesman and McPherson, and one sergeant. The whole were frozen hard. Montgomery's sword (and he was the only officer of the army who wore a sword, that I ever perceived,) was close by his side; and as soon as it was discovered, which was by a drummer-boy, who made a snatch at it on the spur of the

moment, and no doubt considered it as his lawful prize; but I immediately made him deliver it up to me, and some time after I made him a present of seven shillings and six-pence by way of prize-money."

I have searched to see if I could find anything from Carleton himself, and have found in the *Quebec Gazette* the following:

(*Copy of Letter from General Carleton to General Howe, dated Quebec, Jany.* 12, 1776.)

"Sir,—The 5th of December, Mr. Montgomery took post at St. Foy, within less than two miles of Quebec, with some field-artillery; his heavy cannon were landed at Cap Rouge; at the same time Arnold's party took possession of the other avenues leading to the town, and prevented all communication with the country. The 7th, a woman stole into town with letters addressed to the principal merchants, advising them to an immediate submission, and promising great indulgence in case of their compliance. Inclosed was a letter to me in very extraordinary language, and a summons to deliver up the town. The messenger was sent to prison for a few days, and drummed out.

"To give more efficacy to these letters, five small mortars were brought to St. Roch's, and a battery of five cannon and one howitzer raised upon the heights, within about seven hundred yards of the walls. Soon after, Arnold appeared with a white flag, and said he had a letter for me; but he was refused admittance, and ordered to carry back his letter.

"After every preparatory stratagem had been used to intimidate our wretched garrison, as Mr. Montgomery was pleased to call it, an assault was given the 31st December, between four and five in the morning, during a snow-storm from the north-east. The alarm was general; from the side of the River St. Lawrence, along the fortified front round to the bastion, every part seemed equally threatened. Two real attacks took place upon the Lower Town—one under Cape Diamond, led by Mr. Montgomery; the other by Mr. Arnold, upon the part called the Sault-au-Matelot. This at first met with some success, but in the end was stopped. A sally from the Upper Town, under Captain *Laws*, attacked their rear, and sent in many prisoners. Captain *McDougal* afterwards reinforced this party, and followed the rebels into the post they had taken. Thus, Mr. Arnold's corps (himself and a few others excepted, who were wounded and carried off early,) were completely ruined. They were caught, as it were, in a trap; we brought in their five mortars and one cannon. The other attack *was soon repulsed with slaughter*. Mr. Montgomery was left among the dead.

"The rebels have, in this assault, between six and seven hundred men and between forty and fifty officers killed, wounded, and taken prisoners. We had only one lieutenant in the navy, doing duty as captain in the garrison, and four rank and file killed, and thirteen rank and file wounded; two of the latter are since dead.

"You will be pleased to transmit a copy of my letter to the Secretary of State, by the first opportunity, for His Majesty's information.

"G. C."

[*Received at Whitehall, from Major Caldwell, June* 10, 1776.]

Mr. Thompson has left an interesting account how, under his superintendence, the body was removed to *Goberl's* house, near the corner of St. Louis street and the Esplanade, where it was again identified by Mrs. Prentice, who then kept "Free-Masons' Hall," (where Montgomery had been in the habit of putting up during his visits to Quebec,) who was enabled to recognize the body by a scar on one of his cheeks, supposed to be a sabre-cut. By the orders of General Carleton, Mr. Thompson had the body buried near his first wife, (within and near the surrounding wall of the powder magazine, in the gorge of St. Lewis bastion,) where it remained till 1818, when, a request having been made to General Sherbrooke by the General's widow for the body of her husband, Mr. Thompson, then in his 77th year, was again called upon, and pointed out the place where the body lay, and, in presence of Mr. Lewis, nephew of the General, Chief-Justice Sewell, and some officers of the garrison, caused it to be exhumed. Mr. Thompson, on delivering the body to the relatives, made affidavit as to its identity. The affidavit has been long before the public, and is very interesting.

To return to the main narrative:—On the failure of these attempts, and in consequence of the death of Montgomery, the command having devolved on Arnold, he resolved that the siege should resume its character of blockade, with which Carleton seemed well content, as he made no attempt to follow up his success by any operation without the walls,

but contented himself by still further strengthening the accessible points in the Lower Town. The blockading army, which had been greatly reduced by small-pox, &c., and which, after the repulse of the 31st, remained encamped three miles from the city, was reinforced in March, and its numbers brought up again to 2,000. In the beginning of April, Arnold was relieved of the command at Quebec by General Wooster, and proceeded to the command at Montreal. Wooster approached nearer the walls, erected batteries, and re-opened fire on the city, but with no better success than attended the attempt at the commencement of the siege. On the night of the 3rd May an unsuccessful attempt was made by a fire-ship to destroy the ships-of-war and transports lying at the *Cul-de-Sac*, and they hoped that during the confusion they might be successful in an attack on the city by escalade. On their failure, as they had reason to know that aid was hourly expected by the garrison from England, they gave up all hope of success. On the 6th of May, to the great joy of the British, the frigate *Isis* came to anchor in the roads, and Lord Petersham, with the grenadiers and a small party of the 29th, and some marines,—in all, amounting to about 200 men,—landed. A sortie, consisting of from 1,000 to 1,200 men, was at once organized. The enemy was found in full retreat, and a few straggling shots were interchanged without any damage. It was suggested to General Carleton, through his brother, Major Carleton, to make an attempt to cut off the retreat; but "he steadily adhered to his resolution of running no risk as to the safety of the place." No person was more ready than he was, at all times, to expose his person; his *timidity* was only shewn in respect to others and the safety of the town. Other people in his situation, perhaps, might have extended their views to the recovery of the country, and to the operations of the summer campaign. "I confess," says Caldwell, "those ideas struck me in the course of the winter." General Carleton thought and acted differently, and shewed that he felt that the arrival of the *Isis* and the

retreat of the Americans had changed "the winter" of discontent "to glorious summer." The Americans abandoned their stores, artillery, and scaling-ladders; *also their sick*, of whom they left a great many to the care of the British. That they were humanely treated we are happy to know has been acknowledged by Chief-Justice Marshall in his *Life of Washington*. This attempt to take Quebec has been pronounced by some as rash and foolhardy; but many agree with Sir James Carmichael, that, though there were undoubtedly errors of detail, especially in making the real instead of the feint attacks at *Sault-au-Matelot* and *Près-de-Ville*, instead of from the plains of Abraham, "*the attempt was soldier-like and enterprising*. But it was not attended with such risk as at first sight appears. Congress had been assured of the sympathy and active co-operation of a large portion of the population; and, as we have seen, some influential persons of English descent were much inclined to join the invaders. General Carleton was fully aware of this. He knew that the priests were generally in his favor, and refused to confess the Canadians in the rebel interest; but he also knew that for this they had lost influence. Here is one notable example:—Having great confidence in the loyalty and discretion of a Canadian gentleman, M. de Beaujeau, then residing on the *Isle-aux-Grues*, he wrote him to assemble some of his countrymen, and cut off the American guard at Point Levis. M. DeBeaujeau succeeded in mustering about 150 Canadians, but they were betrayed by their disaffected fellow-countrymen, and thirty, who had assembled in a house, were surrounded and taken prisoners; and Messire Bailly, a priest, who stood high in the confidence of several Governors, was shot through the body, and also taken prisoner, though he was shortly released, and recovered.

The conduct of General Carleton during the siege raised him much in general estimation. During the attack of the 31st Dec. he took post at Prescott Gate, the supposed post of danger, as undoubtedly there the great struggle

would have taken place if Montgomery and Arnold had succeeded at the barriers. That he was disposed to do justice to all parties, his despatch, forwarded to the English ministry by Col. Caldwell, proves. In that despatch he makes special mention of *Col. Dupré*, *Major Ecuyer*, and *Captains Bouchette*, *Laforce*, and *Chabot*, of the marine, all Canadians, and gives them credit generally in this sentence: "The militia, British and Canadian, behaved with a steadiness and resolution that could not have been expected from men unused to arms."

Colonel Dupré, who was in command of the Canadian militia during the siege, and secured the favorable notice of the General in his despatch, was subsequently appointed, in reward, to a high command in the militia, and always proved himself a good and loyal subject. *Lieut. Dambourges*, a native of old France, we have already seen, was presented with a lieutenancy in the 84th, in recognition of his merit.

Major Caldwell, whose private letter to Murray, since published by the *Literary and Historical Society*, and from which I have made such frequent quotations, is thus mentioned in the despatch:—"Major Caldwell, who commanded the British militia all winter, as lieut.-colonel commandant, and is bearer of these despatches to your Lordship, has proved himself a faithful subject to his Majesty, and an active and diligent officer." This testimony adds very greatly to the weight of the statements which he has made, and of the things which he knew and had seen. The services of General Carleton were not overlooked: he was at once made a Knight of the Bath, and subsequently became Lord Dorchester. He was no less than four times intrusted with the government of Canada.

Montgomery and Arnold had failed in the attempt to subdue or *annex* Canada; but their merits were truly estimated by Congress. Montgomery had fallen, but his *fall* was glorious, and his adopted country raised a monument to

his memory; and even the representatives of the country that he had opposed—his own native country—did homage in parliament to his virtues. Montgomery was an Irishman by birth, and first served with his regiment, the 17th, at the capture of Louisbourg. Whether he was with Wolfe at Quebec is now doubtful, though it has been so stated by some of our best historians and biographers. He served also with his regiment at the capture of Martinico and Havannah, and did not leave the service of his native country till he sold his commission in 1772, when he went to the State of New York. He married Miss Livingston, daughter of Judge Livingston, of Livingston Manor, on the North River, and was living happily with his wife when the Revolution, in which he, from the first, took a prominent part, commenced. He was a man of excellent parts and disposition, esteemed in private life for his amiable qualities, and secured the confidence of his adopted country by his public conduct.

Of his comrade in arms, General Arnold, we shall only say that it would have been well for him had he also fallen at Quebec—that he had never survived the wound he received there: he would then have been only known as a brave, energetic, and honorable soldier and commander; and *Jared Sparks* would have been saved the painful task of writing "THE LIFE AND *Treason* OF BENEDICT ARNOLD."

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